Definitions for BasicSINS, RankingSINS and MonitoringSINS

Species with information needs include those that either did not have sufficient information to evaluate them in the SGCN selection flowchart or, if they did, they did not meet the criteria for SGCN. There are three categories of SINS (BasicSINS, RankingSINS and MonitoringSINS) organized around fundamentally different types of information need. Their purpose is to help people organize their research and inventory goals and priorities. The definitions are not perfectly distinct and judgment is used by the species teams when assigning species to each group.

- **BasicSINS = Species for which there is little or no information or there is taxonomic uncertainty.** This category includes species with taxonomic questions or that need surveys for basic information on presence/absence or breeding/nonbreeding status in the state. The most important course of action for these species or groups of species is research and inventory to gather this basic information. Most species in this category have a Natural Heritage conservation status rank[1] of SNR (not ranked, state conservation status not yet assessed), but may also be ranked SNA (not applicable because the element is not a suitable target for conservation activities, typically because it is non-native, accidental, irregular, a long-distance migrant/transitory, or the element's presence in Wisconsin is unconfirmed), SH (known only from historical records), or they may not have a status rank at all. Most BasicSINS are invertebrate insects.

  Because different circumstances may lead to a species being ranked as SU, SNR, SNA or SH, not all species with these ranks will be identified as BasicSINS. For example, the SNA rank can be assigned when there is *adequate* information to tell us why a species is not a suitable target for conservation in our state (e.g., migratory bird species, one or two occurrences of a reptile that is not defined as native to Wisconsin) or it can be assigned when there is *inadequate* information to determine whether a species' range is expanding into our state. Species with SU, SNR, SNA or SH ranks may also be RankingSINS (see below) or neither.

- **RankingSINS = Species for which there is basic information, but not enough to assign a numerical rank.** With a reasonable amount of targeted effort we would get sufficient information about rarity, trends, and threats to allow us to assign a numerical rank and move them on or off the SGCN list. Like BasicSINS, species in this category are benefited by surveys or inventories, but the questions are usually more specific and may include measures to understand how a species is affected by environmental factors. Most of the species in this category have a Natural Heritage

[1] http://www.natureserve.org/conservation-tools/conservation-status-assessment. Search phrase: NatureServe conservation status assessment methodology

conservation status rank of SU (unrankable due to lack of information or to substantially conflicting information about status or trends) or SNA, but may also include species with status ranks SNR and SH. Different circumstances can lead to a rank of SU, SNR, SNA or SH such that not all species with these ranks fit this definition and some may be BasicSINS or neither.

- **MonitoringSINS = Species that have numerical conservation status ranks and sufficient information to assess them according to the SGCN selection flowchart[2], but did not meet the SGCN criteria.** This includes species that were "close" to meeting the SGCN criteria. Often these were species that the taxa teams found difficult to reach a consensus on. In contrast to other species that did not meet SGCN criteria, these species are in need of continued monitoring and should be reevaluated during interim SGCN list updates. They may be described in a number of ways such as possibly declining and with some uncertainty whether they are SGCN; recently or historically common in some cases due to large historic range or broad habitat preference, but showing declining trend data (sometimes difficult to quantify or based on expert knowledge); exhibiting population losses or range contraction. Species vulnerable to environmental changes due to disease, large- or broad-scale trends in land or resources use, climate change, etc. may be placed in this category. MonitoringSINS are typically ranked S3G5, S3S4G5 or S3?, but may also be ranked S4G4, S4G5 or S4? if data or expert and professional knowledge determine the immediacy and magnitude of declining trends warrant this.

All other species that are not SGCNs or SINS are treated as stable or common from the point of view of the WWAP's goals. Based on research and professional and expert opinion of the species taxon teams, these species were not assessed using the NHI rank calculator or the SGCN flowchart. Species that are currently stable or common may be affected by environmental changes due to disease, large- or broad-scale trends in land or resources use, climate change, etc. Therefore, like all native species in the state, they will continue to have their status evaluated. The SGCN assessment process is fluid and the factors used to assess species can be reassessed at any time. We will have interim updates to the SGCN and SINS lists to accommodate new information as it becomes available.

Go directly to the Wisconsin's rare animals page[3] to get biodiversity information, including which species belong to the three SINS categories, or download the Species of Greatest Conservation Need and Species with information needs database under **Resources** on the WWAP main page[4] in which you can sort by animal group and the three SINS categories.

[2] See Section 2. Approach and Methods of the 2015-2025 Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan.
[3] http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/endangeredresources/Animals.asp Search phrase: Wisconsin's rare animals
[4] http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Wildlifehabitat/ActionPlan.html Search phrase: Wisconsin wildlife action plan